

Message Text

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67

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10

AID-05 /069 W

----- 003851

P 212137Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9343

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR PRIORITY

USCINCSO PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 0716

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, PINT, ES, HO

SUBJECT: ACTING FONMIN'S VIEW OF JALAPA MEETING

REF: SAN SALVADOR 0661 AND 0697

1. DCM AND POLOFF PAID CALL ON ACTING FONMIN PINEDA ON AFTERNOON OF FEBRUARY 20. PINEDA WAS FORTHCOMING IN HIS APPRAISAL OF THE JALAPA MEETING AND OF THE CHANCES FOR A SETTLEMENT OF THE HONDURAS-EL SALVADOR DISPUTE.

2. PINEDA SAID THAT THE MEETING WAS IMPORTANT IN PREPARING THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SCENE FOR NEGOTIATIONS, AND FELT THAT THE CHANCES FOR RESOLVING THE DISPUTE WERE EXCELLENT. WHEN ASKED ABOUT REESTABLISHING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS, PINEDA REMARKED THAT THE REACTION IN THE PRESS TO SUCH A POSSIBILITY HAD BEEN NEGATIVE. HE STATED THAT THE POSITION OF THE GOH IS THAT FORMAL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WOULD BE THE RESULT OF A GENERAL PEACE TREATY RATHER THAN THE PRELUDE.

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3. HE COMMENTED AT SEVERAL POINTS THAT IT IS NECESSARY

TO HAVE NEGOTIATIONS IN GOOD FAITH ON BOTH SIDES PINEDA EMPHASIZED THAT HONDURAS IS FULLY COMMITTED TO PURSUE ANY PATH THAT WOULD LEAD TO A FINAL SETTLEMENT. HE REMARKED THAT SUCH PATHS INCLUDED DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS, MEDIATION, ARBITRATION OR A COMBINATION OF SUCH METHODS. WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE SALVADORAN NEGOTIATING POSITION, PINEDA RESPONDED THAT HE DID NOT KNOW OF ANY SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE OR CONCESSION IN THE GOES POSITION CONCERNING THE DISPUTE.

4. HE SAID THAT THE MEETINGS OF CHIEFS OF STATE ARE USEFUL AS A FRAMEWORK WITHIN WHICH NEGOTIATIONS CAN BE CARRIED ON BY WORKING COMMISSIONS. HOWEVER, HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE ACTUAL WORK OF RESOLVING THE POINTS AT ISSUE COULD NOT BE DONE AT THESE MEETINGS. HE OBSERVED THAT SUCH A MEETING WOULD BE THE PLACE TO SIGN A PEACE TREATY ALREADY NEGOTIATED AT LOWER LEVELS AND APPROVED BY BOTH COUNTRIES.

5. PINEDA STATED THAT THE GOH MAINTAINS, AS IT HAS SINCE 1969, THAT THE ISSUES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES MUST BE RESOLVED ON A GLOBAL AND SIMULTANEOUS BASIS. HE SAID THAT THE CURRENT SALVADORAN POSITION IS THE SAME. HE LAUGHINGLY REMARKED THAT PRESIDENT MOLINA HAD BEEN INSISTENT AT THE JALAPA MEETING THAT NO ISSUE SHOULD COME BEFORE ANY OTHER IN A GLOBAL AND SIMULTANEOUS AGREEMENT. PINEDA REMARKED THAT AS LONG AS ALL ISSUES ARE SETTLED AT THE SAME TIME NO ISSUE HAS TO BE SINGLED OUT AS THE PREDOMINANT MATTER. HE OBSERVED THAT THE MAJOR HONDURAN INTEREST IS TO DEMARCATHE THE FRONTIER WHILE EL SALVADOR'S IS TO REOPEN THE PAN AMERICAN HIGHWAY.

6. WHEN QUESTIONED ABOUT REPORTS OF AN IMMINENT MEETING OF THE TWO CHIEFS OF STATE, PINEDA SAID THAT THERE WOULD BE NONE OF THIS WEEKEND (FEBRUARY 22-23) SINCE LOPEZ WAS BUSY WITH OTHER MATTERS. HE REMARKED THAT IT IS NECESSARY TO ASCERTAIN THE REACTIONS DEVELOPING IN HONDURAS TO THE JALAPA MEETING PRIOR TO HOLDING A LOPEZ-MOLINA MEETING.

7. COMMENT: THERE SEEMS LITTLE DOUBT THAT THE ATMOSPHERE CREATED BY THE JALAPA MEETING HAS CONTRIBUTED TO THE BELIEF THAT 1975 MIGHT BE THE "YEAR OF PEACE." PINEDA CERTAINLY
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EXUDED A HIGH DEGREE OF OPTIMISM THAT IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO RESOLVE THE DISPUTE WITHIN A YEAR. HOWEVER, HE FIRMLY EMPHASIZED THAT THIS WAS DEPENDENT ON GOES "GOOD FAITH."

8. POINT TWO OF THE JALAPA DECLARATION REFERRING TO A POSSIBLE RENEWAL OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AROUSED CONSIDERABLE CRITICISM (SEE TEGUCIGALPA 0654). THE FORCE OF THIS CRITICISM PROBABLY CAUSED LOPEZ

TO DELAY MEETING WITH MOLINA FOR THE TIME BEING. LOPEZ
UNDOUBTEDLY RECOGNIZES THAT HE IS VULNERABLE TO CRITICISM
FROM THE TRADITIONAL PARTIES THAT HE IS "SELLING OUT" IF
HE APPEARS TO BE BACKING AWAY FROM THE LONG-HELD HONDURAN
POSITION ON THE GLOBAL AND SIMULTANEOUS SOLUTION OF THE
DISPUTE BY DISCUSSING SEPARATELY THE REOPENING OF DIPLO-
MATIC RELATIONS AT THIS STAGE.
SANCHEZ

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DISPUTE SETTLEMENT, MEETINGS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, BOUNDARY CLAIMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975TEGUCI00716
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750063-0126
From: TEGUCIGALPA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750222/aaaaatek.tel
Line Count: 123
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 SAN SALVADOR 0661, 75 AND 0697
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 SEP 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <13 NOV 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ACTING FONMIN'S VIEW OF JALAPA MEETING
TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, PINT, ES, HO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006